



MECAP NEWS

MEDICAL EXAMINERS AND CORONERS ALERT PROJECT

The Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project (MECAP) is designed to collect timely information on fatalities involving consumer products. There are thousands of types of consumer products under the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC's) jurisdiction, and we need your help in identifying hazardous or potentially dangerous products. The CPSC collects death, injury, and incident information from many sources, including medical examiners and coroners; the nation's hospital emergency rooms; and other sources, such as news clips, the Internet, our toll-free hotline, and death certificates.

You can submit fatality reports and reports of harm or potential harm involving consumer products to our website: www.SaferProducts.gov. Guidelines for completing a MECAP report are located at: <https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>.

There are several ways you can report a MECAP case:

- ***ONLINE MECAP reporting at link:***
<https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>
- ***Phone: 1-800-638-8095***
- ***Fax number: 301-504-0038***
- ***E-mail to: epdsfax@cpsc.gov***
- ***Postal Mail: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission***
Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project (MECAP)
Attn: Yolanda Nash
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ynash@cpsc.gov
1-800-638-8095 x7502 or 301-504-7502

Please contact us whenever you encounter a fatal incident that may be related to a consumer product. Every MECAP report is important to us and is included in the CPSC's incident database. All it takes is one MECAP report to alert the CPSC to a potentially hazardous product. Raising awareness of longstanding, hidden, and emerging product safety hazards is crucial to empowering consumers and reducing the risk of death and injury.

The following pages summarize a few medical examiner and coroner reports received during the months of January through March 2017. The entries include a brief description of the incident to illustrate the type and nature of the reported fatalities. This important information helps us to carry out our mission to protect the public from product-related injuries and deaths.

We appreciate your support, and please continue to report your product-related cases to us.

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****Cases selected for CPSC follow-up investigation***

Asphyxia/Suffocation

*A 7-month-old male was found unresponsive in a portable travel infant swing. The decedent's father had placed the decedent down for a nap in a portable travel infant swing. The father left the room while the decedent was sleeping. When the father returned, he discovered the decedent was unconscious and unresponsive. The decedent was belted in the swing's harness with the top of the seat pad off. The top of the seat pad tube frame was partially inverting the decedent and placing him in a hyperextended head position. He was transported by ambulance to a local emergency department where he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was unspecified.

A 2-year-old male died while trapped in an aluminum window frame. The aluminum window was left open about 5 inches. The decedent tried to squeeze through the opening, but his neck did not fit. The cause of death was positional asphyxia.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

A 44-year-old male decedent was found unresponsive in the bedroom of his townhouse. A space heater was discovered near the decedent. The residence had no power or heat. The temperature was 20 degrees in the residence. Fire department officials measured the carbon monoxide level in the house at 3,000 ppm, which is extremely dangerous CO exposure. A gas water tank was positioned to "on" in the basement with no flame. The cause of death was carbon monoxide inhalation.

*A 60-year-old female died from carbon monoxide toxicity after using a propane gas-powered deep fryer in an enclosed residential

garage. The cause of death was carbon monoxide toxicity.

Submersion

An 8-month-old male was found unresponsive in a 5-gallon container. His mother discovered him standing on both feet bent over at the waist with his head submerged in an open, lidless snap-type rectangular plastic tote container. The container was filled with dirty mop water. Emergency rescue personnel performed CPR at the house. The decedent was transported to a local emergency department where he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was drowning.

A 1-year-old male died after drowning in a bucket. The decedent lived with a family of 14 children in the household. The decedent and other children had been watching a movie. After the movie finished, they were not able to find the decedent. He was discovered bent over at the waist in a 5-gallon bucket that contained water. His head was submerged under the water, and his feet were dangling a few inches off the ground. Previously, the bucket had been used to house a Christmas tree, but the family neglected to empty the bucket after the tree was discarded. The decedent was transported to a local children's hospital where he died. The cause of death was drowning.

Fire

Two males, a 14-year-old and a 12-year-old, died in a house fire. The decedents were trapped in their upstairs bedroom. The homeowners had wired a light switch from an extension cord attached to a light adaptor. The cause of death was thermal injuries.

A 66-year-old female was found inside her home, which was engulfed in flames. The decedent used a propane heater to stay warm. The decedent was trying to change out a propane container when the fire ignited. The cause of death was thermal injuries.

*A 47-year-old male died in a camper fire. The decedent was sleeping in the camper when it caught fire. He was discovered lying prone on the floor of the camper. The fire originated in the rear of the camper where an extension cord was attached to the power source of the camper. The cause of death was thermal injuries.

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

A 32-year-old female decedent was a passenger on an all-terrain vehicle when the driver of the ATV ran off the road and struck a mailbox. Both the driver and passenger were ejected. The decedent was not wearing a helmet. The decedent struck her head on the asphalt. She was transported to a local hospital, and later airlifted to a trauma center. The cause of death was a posterior scalp laceration, cerebral edema, developing hydrocephalus, subdural hemorrhage, subarachnoid hemorrhage, skull fracture, and scalp hematoma.

Electrocution

A 50-year-old male died from electrocution while installing a dryer vent. The decedent was a carpenter. He was electrocuted from an electrical circuit in the rear of the washer/dryer unit. Fire and rescue responded to the scene. The cause of death was electrocution due to incorrect installation of the power cord.

An 82-year-old female died from electrocution while attempting to turn on the fan above her kitchen stove. The decedent was thrown back after being shocked. She struck her head, neck

and left hip. The cause of death was delayed medical complications due to electrocution and fall.

Fatalities Involving Other Hazards

A 77-year-old male fell 30–40 feet from a ladder while trimming a tree. He sustained multiple blunt force injuries. The report stated that the deceased had tied two ladders together with a rope, and then tied them to a tree in order to reach the branches. His wife was in the house, and she heard one of the branches fall and looked out the window, but she did not see the decedent in the tree. Although resuscitation was attempted, the decedent died at the scene. The cause of death was multiple blunt force head injuries.